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Introduction & Disclaimers

Hello, readers who didn't skip this! I am your author, Azzy. I've read all of the Warriors series, excluding Bramblestar's Storm because, well, I've been a bit busy. Anyway, I have a great knowledge regarding this series. But no matter how much I read this, it is sadly not mine. They belong to Erin Hunter, and I shall praise her for writing such a thrilling series!

But! This story that you're about to read *is*, in fact, by yours truly. A lot of it is inspired by other writers, but that of course will be in the Dedications. Now, I've read a shit ton of Warriors books on here. Some of them were amazing (*cough* Unmasked *cough*), and some completely awful (*cough* Starkit's Prophecy *cough*).

However, I learned very much from all of them. I took in the information and ideas, and came up with a plot of my own. So I have many people to thank for this, and I'm sure you'll agree that they're very talented writers.

Now, you're probably reading this for more information about what you're about to read, yes? Well the main point of view will be of Emberpaw. She's a blind apprentice who wants to be a warrior, y'know the simple stuff, but when she goes to a gathering, a prophecy regarding going on a journey is declared. Herself and her mentor go on the mission along with two other cats from each of the neighboring clans. They're all guided by two mysterious cats who disappear once they reach their destination; a tribe.

Sorry! But that's all I can give you. Well, I *could* tell you more, but that would ruin the story wouldn't it?

Enjoy, darlings!!

Dedications

To all of my inspirations! Thank you for your very marvelous stories!

Sparrowheart838
LightningStrikeTC
PoppyTea
VectorSigma

Allegiances

[image]

//Published as a sneak peek on 4-18-16//

LEAFCLAN ; ***The Intelligent & Brave***

Leader- Breezestar: black and gray tabby she-cat with white paws and green eyes
Deputy- Sandflight: tan tom with darker flecks and bright green eyes
Nature Guardian- Gingerspots: white and ginger she-cat with green eyes
Med. Cat- Spruceleaf: dark brown tom with white paws and emerald eyes
Warriors-
Blizzardflurry: large white tom with grey flecks and green eyes *(Apprentice, Mousepaw)*
Softsong: quiet black-furred she-cat with gentle blue eyes
Eaglewing: black and white tom with big amber eyes
Stripedpelt: grey tabby tom with white paws and green eyes
Violetflower: purplish-gray she-cat with white paws and calm blue eyes *(Apprentice, Echopaw)*
Treeblossom: brown she-cat with deep green eyes *(Apprentice, Swiftpaw)*
Shadowheart: young grey tabby tom with black paws and amber eyes
Blackberry: elderly black she-cat with strange purple eyes
Cheetahfang: golden-furred tom with black spots and amber eyes
Rowanpetal: dark ginger tabby she-cat with green eyes
Apprentices-
Swiftpaw: pale brown tabby tom with blue eyes
Mousepaw: pale brown she-cat with white paws and green eyes
Echopaw: black she-cat with green eyes and gray paws
Queens-
Nightshadow: mute black she-cat with amber eyes

(Kits: Dewkit, Hollykit, Emberkit, Flickeringkit)
Palewillow: pale grey tabby she-cat with white paws and yellow eyes *(Expecting Cheetahfang's kits)*
Kits-
Dewkit: grey she-kit with white paws and pale yellow eyes (*kit of Nightshadow & Stripedpelt)*
Hollykit: black she-kit with green eyes (*kit of Nightshadow & Stripedpelt*)
Emberkit: black she-kit with ginger spots and blind golden eyes (*kit of Nightshadow & Stripedpelt*)
Flickeringkit: gray tabby she-kit with white paws and blue eyes (*kit of Nightshadow & Stripedpelt*)
Elders-
Dawnshine: golden she-cat with lighter colored spots and blue eyes
Quietbird: small gray tabby she-cat with white paws and pale green eyes

SUNCLAN ; *The Swift & Loyal*

Leader- Darkstar: black tom with grey paws and blue eyes
Deputy- Whitecloud: white she-cat with bright blue eyes
Nature Guardian- Ravenberry: glossy black she-cat with unnerving amber eyes
Med. Cat- Honeydrop: honey-colored she-cat with white paws and amber eyes
(Apprentice, Rainpool)
Warriors-
Willowfrost: silver tabby she-cat with green eyes
(Apprentice, Sweetpaw)
Stormbreeze: grey tabby tom with white paws and blue eyes
(Apprentice, Icepaw)
Cinderflower: gray she-cat with white paws and blue eyes
Cloudwhisker: white tom with long whiskers and blue eyes
(Apprentice, Graypaw)
Longfur: grey tom with extremely fluffy fur and amber eyes
(Apprentice, Adderpaw)
Bearclaw: brown tom with long claws and amber eyes
Dapplesnow: white she-cat with one orange spot and one black spot; has amber eyes
Ripplestream: blue-grey tabby she-cat with blue eyes

Dimlight: pale grey tom with dark blue eyes
Pantherfang: black tom with amber eyes
Apprentices-
Rainpool: grey tabby tom with black paws and amber eyes
Sweetpaw: cream-furred tabby she-cat with white paws and pretty blue eyes
Adderpaw: pale tan tom with amber eyes
Icepaw: white tom with deep blue eyes
Graypaw: solid gray tom with bright green eyes
Queens-
Redbird: dark ginger she-cat with white paws and green eyes *(Expecting Bearclaw's kits)*
Skyflight: pure white she-cat with dazzling blue eyes (*Expecting Dimlight's kits)*
Elders-
Gorsebreeze: pale gray tom with amber eyes
Angel: fluffy white she-cat with grey paws and crystal blue eyes (former kittypet)
Heatherleaf: tan tabby she-cat with white paws and green eyes

SNOWCLAN ; *The Silent & Kind*

Leader- Maplestar: white tortoiseshell she-cat with dazzling green eyes
Deputy- Waterfur: blue-grey tom with white paws and blue eyes
Nature Guardian- Stargaze: white tom with striped tail along with one blue eye and one amber eye
Med. Cat- Goldeneye: golden-furred she-cat with a single green eye *(Apprentice, Beepaw)*
Warriors-
Rayshine: golden tom with amber eyes
(Apprentice, Ashpaw)
Foxflame: russet-furred tom with green eyes and white paws
Moonfur: silver she-cat with black paws and calm blue eyes
Oakleaf: brown tom with white paws and green eyes
(Apprentice, Smokepaw)
Spottedheart: tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes
(Apprentice, Fernpaw)
Littleblaze: small gray she-cat with fiery amber eyes
(Apprentice, Birdpaw)

Lightfang: golden-furred tom with white paws and green eyes
Poppysong: white tortoiseshell she-cat with bright green eyes
Hareclaw: pale golden-furred tom with blue eyes
Brighteyes: ginger she-cat with white paws and unusually bright amber eyes
Apprentices-
Fernpaw: silver tabby she-cat with green eyes
Smokepaw: gray tom with amber eyes
Ashpaw: pale gray tom with amber eyes and darker flecks
Birdpaw: white tortoiseshell she-cat wth blue eyes
Beepaw: yellow tom with black stripes and amber eyes
Queens-
Silverleaf: silver tabby she-cat with green eyes
(*Kits: Firekit, Frozenkit, Gingerkit, Dovekit)*
Kits-
Firekit: dark ginger tom with white paws and amber eyes (*kit of Silverleaf & Foxflame)*
Frozenkit: pale gray tabby she-kit with blue eyes (*kit of Silverleaf & Foxflame)*
Gingerkit: pale ginger she-kit with one white spot and green eyes (*kit of Silverleaf & Foxflame)*
Dovekit: white she-kit with gray stripes and blue eyes (*kit of Silverleaf & Foxflame)*
Elders-
Crowflight: black tom with amber eyes
Flowerpetal: white she-cat with cream-colored paws and blue eyes
Rogue: black tom with one amber eye and one blue eye (former rogue)

TRIBE OF FALLING RAIN

Guide- Fallen Flowers: cream-colored she-cat with patches of golden fur and amber eyes; has the marking of a cluster of three flowers on her shoulder
Second- Bright Sun: pale ginger tom with darker ginger spots and dazzling blue eyes; has the marking of a radiant sun on his chest

Betas- (***Cats above 15 moons that have trained at least one apprentice, and are candidates to be Second)***

Lucky Star: black tom with a single grey paw and bright blue eyes; has the marking of a small star on his cheek
Green Clover: grey tom with black paws and deep green eyes; has the marking of a clover on his foreleg
Amber Petal: fiery-furred she-cat with white paws and glistening green eyes; has the marking of a petal on her flank

Healers- (***Cats fully trained in the art of herbs and healing)***

Golden Sun: golden-colored she-cat with white paws and green eyes; has the marking of a sun on her forehead
(Apprentice, Jay)
Water Ripple: blue-grey tom with blue eyes; has the marking of a ripple in water on his shoulder

Front Line Warriors- (***Excellently trained cats above 16 moons that have been requested for said role)***

Blood Drop: crimson-furred tom with long claws and frightening amber eyes; has the marking of a teardrop on his hip
(Apprentice, Eternal)
Vixen Slash: white tabby she-cat with bright green eyes; has the marking of three slashes on her side
(Apprentice, Splash)
Misty Grin: blue-grey she-cat with white paws and blue eyes; has the marking of a smile on her hip
(Apprentice, Ice)
Ghost Hearts: ghostly pale she-cat with three small hearts on her shoulder

Middle Line Warriors- (***Cats above 13 moons that have been requested solely by their previous mentors)***

Flight Wings: pure white she-cat with amazing blue eyes; has the marking of a pair of wings on her chest
(Apprentice, Zebra)
Dust Wind: dusty brown tom with white paws and amber eyes; has the marking of a tornado on his shoulder
Stone Bird: solid grey tom with amber eyes; has the marking of a bluebird on his chest
Iris Scar: white tabby she-cat with amber eyes; has the marking of a

scar over her right eye
(Apprentice, Phoenix)

Back Line Warriors- (*Cats 12 moons old or more; must be with their mentors for the first quarter moon)*

Frost Eye: white and gray she-cat with green eyes; has the marking of a single eye on her forehead
Silver Feather: silver tabby she-cat with blue eyes; has the marking of a feather on her shoulder
Blur Stone: grey tabby she-cat with white paws and twitchy blue eyes; has the marking of a stone on her foreleg

Scouts- (*Fully trained cats who are lithe and stealthy to scout ahead)*

Leopard Spots: white tom with black spots and green eyes; has the marking of two bigger spots together on his hindleg
(Apprentice, Night)
Blue River: blue-grey tom with white paws and amber eyes; has the marking of stream on his side
(Apprentice, Snake)
Mouse Whiskers: mottled brown tom with amber eyes; has the marking of whiskers on both sides of his muzzle

Hunters- (*Fully trained cats whom are skilled in scenting and hunting)*

Chrome Gem: silver tom with white paws and blue eyes; has the marking of an onyx gem on his shoulder
(Apprentice, Strike)
Amethyst Shine: purple-tinted grey she-cat with white paws and indigo eyes; has the marking of rays around her left eye
Wolf Claws: fluffy grey tom with amber eyes; has the marking of claws on his shoulder
(Apprentice, Moss)
Boulder Claws: grey tom with amber eyes; has the marking of claws on his cheek
(Apprentice, Kiya)
Lion Berry: golden she-cat with white paws and green eyes; has the marking of a berry on her shoulder

(Apprentice, Sun)
Holly Leaves: black she-cat with blue eyes; has the marking of two leaves on her hip

Carriers- (*She-cats who are expecting kits and/or nursing them)*

Rose Thorn: dark ginger she-cat with one white paw and blue eyes; has the marking of a thorn in her foreleg
(Expecting Blue River's kits)

Warrior Apprentices- (*Cats 6+ moons old who are training to become a warrior)*

Zebra: white tabby she-cat with amber eyes
Splash: white-and-grey tom with blue eyes
Phoenix: fiery-furred she-cat with icy blue eyes
Eternal: orange-and-ginger tom with flashy amber eyes
Ice: white tom with blue eyes

Scout Apprentices- (*Cats 6 moons+ training to become a Scout)*

Snake: mottled brown she-cat with narrow green eyes
Night: black tom with emotionless amber eyes

Hunter Apprentices- (*Cats who are 6+ moons old and training to become a Hunter)*

Moss: white tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes
Sun: golden tom with white paws and dazzling amber eyes
Kiya: brown tabby she-cat with blue eyes
Strike: black-and-white tom with amber eyes

Healer Apprentices- (*Cats who are 6+ moons old and are training to become a Healer)*

Jay: grey tabby tom with white paws and blue eyes

Story Tellers- (*Cats over 68 moons old and are ready to retire and entertain the kits)*

Lyla Holly: grey she-cat with white paws and green eyes; has the marking of mistletoe on her shoulder

Crimson Fire: dark ginger tom with amber eyes; has the marking of flames on his side

CATS OUTSIDE OF THE CLANS AND TRIBES-

Silentcosmo: black she-cat with ginger-tipped snout and remarkable green eyes
Crackedheart: black and white tom with pale green eyes
Crescent: white she-cat with black crescent mark on the left of her eye; has dark blue eyes

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Prologue

[image] [image]

//Finished as of 3-5-16//

Mood Song: "World on Fire" - Les Friction

Prologue

Silver light shone upon the rich green leaves adorning the thick trees. Their chipped bark was rough, and as they held their countless branches, they seemed to cast an intimidating shadow over who dared look at them.

But that arrogance was soon dampened by the strong wind that blew through the leaves, causing some to fall. Their trunks creaked and heaved as the breezes stayed persistent, growing stronger and stronger, before the entire forest was being tousled back and forth in the terrible wind.

Thunder suddenly crackled throughout the entire vicinity, rumbling into the ground and shaking the roots of every plant nearby.

A strike of white hot energy zapped toward one of the many trees, setting it aflame as it disappeared faster than the naked eye could register.

Amber flames licked at the bark generously, traveling upwards to the leaves and turning them into ash. More waves of fire advanced on the surrounding trees, leaving shriveled up sticks and fading cinders in their wake.

Not much further away, panic was stricken into a large group of felines as they scampered in and out of bracken-weaved dens.

One particular cat was perched upon a ledge overlooking the chaotic camp. His dark tabby fur was ruffled, and his uneasy green eyes were flicking from one cat to the next. His whiskers twitched

slightly with fear, but that was the only emotion you could see visually.

Suddenly standing up, he straightened his shoulders and faced the crowd of panicking felines.

"Cats of ThunderClan! There is nothing to fear! All we need to do, is to be calm and believe that StarClan will help us in our time of need," he mewed collectively, his tail flicking from side to side a bit.

That seemed to calm them down a bit, as they nodded in agreement and sat down next to each other. Some still cast worried glances to the entrance of the clearing, but for the most part, they seemed okay.

A petite tabby she-cat then padded quickly over to the tom, eyes widened in anxiety and alarm.

"Shadestar!" She called quietly, halting in front of him as she caught her breath.

"Quietbird! What's the matter? Surely StarClan has cleared a way for us to escape?" He said to her, ears pricked and eyes hopeful.

"Shadestar," she breathed again, "I'm sorry...neither I, Breezesong or Brightsun have found a way to the Shallow Creek."

"And the DirtPlace?" He questioned, now standing up with worry flickering in his gaze.

Her ears flattened. "The back way is blocked by fallen branches, sir. I don't think there's a way out of this..." Her eyes dropped to the ground, her tail waving in dismay.

Silence met her words. Many emotions were flashing in the leader's eyes as he struggled to figure out a solution. But as he heard the frightened yowl of a cat, he realized it was over. There was nothing he could do.

"Mama!" He overheard a kit say. "Shadestar will save us, right?"

"Of course he will, Aspenkit," replied a golden tabby queen,

soothingly stroking her daughter's back with her tail. "StarClan won't let us fall. And Shadestar is a very noble leader."

The dark-furred tom swallowed thickly and shut his eyes tight.

"This is our destiny," he breathed out, gaze opening and staring into the quickly approaching flames. "Let us hope and pray that there will be new generations of stronger cats. And that they will never meet a fate such as this."

The she-cat, who had been sitting next to him, nodded soundlessly. She was busy staring at the ground in defeat, as their clan was slowly realizing what was happening. That their leader wasn't going to call out orders any time soon. And that the wildfire was certainly not halting in its mission of destruction.

All their heads were bowed, and the crackling of flames was coming closer. Smoke drifted into the clearing, and caused several to cough.

The queen covered her kit, and smothered her in her fur so she wouldn't see the danger.

And finally, the flames broke through.

Chapter One

[image]

//Finished as of 3-11-16//

One

Sunlight bathed the sandy clearing in warmth. Cats laid upon smooth stones, soaking in the golden light. Others were sharing tongues peacefully as kits tackled each other in a playful and good-hearted manner.

"Flickeringkit, Hollykit, stop annoying Palewillow! Dewkit, don't even think about hiding away with Spruceleaf! Emberkit, would you stop trying to get away from your mother?" A tabby tom scolded each kit in turn, shaking his head in exasperation.

Emberkit, a small black-and-ginger she-cat immediately did as told, halting in her attempts of escaping from her mother's washing. From her hearing, she could tell that the others obeyed their father too.

After a nudge from her mother, the blind she-cat slinked away. One of her sisters was instead pulled into the older cat's arms, being bombarded with many licks to smooth down her fur.

"Nightshadow!" Hollykit whined, trying to tug away, only to be pulled back into her chest.

The she-cat shook her head, a small smirk playing on her face. "Nope! You can't escape!"

"All cats old enough to follow the leaves, gather beneath the SkyTree!" The familiar call echoed around the clearing, coaxing the cats of LeafClan to approach the center of camp.

Nightshadow and Stripedpelt nudged their four kits outside of the nursery and below the SkyTree, joining the large crowd of felines

with pride glowing in their eyes.

"Flickeringkit, Hollykit, Dewkit and Emberkit, step forward," the tabby she-cat commanded, proudly puffing out her chest as she sat upon one of the several branches.

The four she-cats padded closer to her, tails flicking expectantly.

"You have all reached the age of six moons and are ready to be apprenticed," she began, eyeing each of them. "From this day on, until you earn your warrior names, and medicine cat name," she added as she glanced at Dewkit. "You shall be known as Flickeringpaw, Hollypaw, Dewpaw and Emberpaw."

She looked over the large group of cats before continuing. "Eaglewing, you were trained excellently by Blackberry and it is now time you have your first apprentice."

The black-and-white tom calmly stood from his place by the other warriors, but excitement was dancing in his big amber eyes as he walked toward the grey tabby.

"I trust that you will pass your knowledge onto young Flickeringpaw," the leader concluded, smiling as the two touched noses.

"Sandflight, you trained Shadowheart to the best of your abilities, and he has come out as an amazing warrior. I expect that the same will happen to Hollypaw," Breezestar stated, her deputy touching noses with the small black she-cat delicately.

"Spruceleaf, it is time you take on an apprentice that will take your place in the future. Until that time comes, you shall teach Dewpaw all you know."

The dark brown tom nodded and gently pressed his nose to the petite she-cat's.

"And Shadowheart, it is time you take on your first apprentice. You may be young, but you have much to offer. And I trust that you will pass that gift onto little Emberpaw," the leader finished.

The two touched noses, the spotted she-cat slightly faltering when she brushed to the right of the tom's nose when she overshot it just by feeling.

Luckily it was subtle, so none of the cats seemed to notice. They were too busy cheering.

"Flickeringpaw! Hollypaw! Dewpaw! Emberpaw! Flickeringpaw! Hollypaw! Dewpaw! Emberpaw!"

"This clan meeting is dismissed," Breezestar purred, slipping away into her den at the base of the tree.

Emberpaw collectively stood in front of her mentor, eyes patient but blank as she awaited his commands.

"You're blind, aren't you?" He instead said, catching her off guard.

She lashed her tail indignantly, eyes narrowed in a false set of anger.

"How *dare* you make such crude accusations!" She hissed, fluffing up her fur to seem intimidating. "If I were to be blind, I'd be a medicine cat."

Shadowheart stared at her for a moment. "So you are... Come, we shall speak more during the tour of the territory." With that, he padded ahead, leaving a stunned apprentice to trail after him.

They passed through the heather barrier of the camp, carefully avoiding any of the stray tendrils lining the entrance.

Tension hung in the air like dew, weighing down on both cats. Though the tom seemed much more calm than when he first greeted his apprentice.

They padded a little further into the forest, tall oaks and aspens lining the worn dirt path. Delicate green leaves swayed in the breeze as they fell to the ground, joining the countless others. Sunlight streamed through the canopy above, dappling the forest floor in splotches of golden light. Scents mulled around in the wind, almost overwhelming Emberpaw as she tried to keep up with her

mentor's swift strides.

They finally halted in a flattened area, thin maple trees surrounding it. Small clumps of golden flowers grew here and there, while the scent of vole was strong.

The she-cat looked around curiously, though she could not see through her startling golden eyes. She could feel the warm green-leaf breeze in her fur, and the sound of leaves gently dropping onto the grass. She could smell the vole not too far away, but she had yet to learn how to hunt. She could taste the sweet tang of honey from a hive she estimated was several fox-lengths near. Although she could not see, she could feel, hear, smell and even *taste* what was around her.

"Training will be much harder, you know," Shadowheart's voice cut through the calm silence of the forest. He was sitting coolly, tail curled around his paws as he awaited his apprentice's response.

"Of course it will," she agreed, forcing her fur to lie flat as she gave up on trying to convince her mentor otherwise. "But I am a hard worker. And I don't give up easily...though that sometimes can be a bad trait." She sent a small smile his way, tail flicking slightly.

He smiled gently at her, wishing she could see it.

"Well then, how about we start?"

Chapter Two

[image]

//Finished as of 3-18-16//

Two

Shadowheart had kept true to his word when he had warned Emberpaw about the difficulty of training.

A quarter moon had passed, and the remainder of the first day was simply getting to know and recognize the territories and scents of the other clans. LeafClan resided between SnowClan and unmarked plains that eventually led to SunClan.

She'd describe SnowClan's scent as a strange mixture of rain and the bland smell of dirt and rocks. However, for SunClan, she'd choose sand and fresh grass to describe it.

She despised both scents, finding them gross and deeming them as enemies. In response, Shadowheart had laughed and agreed.

On the second day, her mentor kept her out from dawn till dusk, training her to become one with her remaining senses, and to find her sight not needed to be used. She didn't enjoy it very much, but she knew better than to voice her thoughts. So instead, she obliged and did the exercises Shadowheart suggested for her to do.

Continuing that for two more sunrises, she was able to sense where to put her paws and how low she had to keep to the ground for the hunting crouch. Countless corrections had been called to her before doing so, saying how she had to keep her tail still and how her belly fur brushed against the grass beneath her. But she still managed to do it nonetheless.

The next day she practiced it more, before Shadowheart had confirmed it to be mastered. With realization that she could be an incredible warrior, blind or not, she pushed herself further.

She could now feel where the leaves were just by crouching; could now sense how far away any valuable prey was just by listening closely to the faintest of breezes; and could now calculate how far to jump to catch her prey by putting all the skills together.

Of course, four days wasn't enough to perfect her hunting; she still had trouble with catching birds. So for the rest of that quarter moon, she practiced day and night to catch at least three pieces of prey.

Emberpaw learned that prey was much easier to catch at moonhigh, as it was usually sleeping. But the darkness the night held didn't bother the she-cat, as she already only saw black.

"Emberpaw. Emberpaw, wake up," the soft voice of Dewpaw echoed into her ears.

The black and ginger tortoiseshell apprentice gradually opened her eyes, though she could not see a difference as to when they were closed.

"Sorry for waking you. It's just that Shadowheart wants you for dawn patrol," the medicine cat apprentice said shyly, ears flicking nervously.

"Oh. Right. Yes, thank you," Emberpaw dipped her head, rising from her nest - much to her muscles' disappointment - and shaking her fur before exiting the den, doing nothing more to acknowledge her littermate.

Unbeknownst to her, the sky was dimming to a deep grey. Oranges, yellows, pinks, purples and dark blues streaked above, stars slowly flickering out as light advanced.

"Ah, Emberpaw! You're here!" Blackberry smiled from her place next to Eaglewing and Flickeringpaw.

She nodded curtly to the bubbly she-cat before turning to where she could smell her mentor's scent, finding that he was coming toward them

"Sorry that I was late," the tabby tom apologized, coming over to sit

next to Emberpaw. "Sandflight had to talk to me, but it was fairly brief."

"Oh don't worry about it," Blackberry purred lightly, her tail swishing. "He always does that to the mentors who have their first apprentice. He did it to Eaglewing too."

After a confirmed nod from the bulky tom, Shadowheart smiled slightly before standing up.

"Well then, how about we head off?"

• * •

Their first destination was the Cherry Blossom, where a massive tree with leaves and flowers of the brightest pink was. It was what marked the border between LeafClan and SnowClan.

As Blackberry and Shadowheart marked it, Eaglewing bolted into the underbrush to hunt, Flickeringpaw bounding after him.

Before Emberpaw could follow them, the soft pawsteps of another cat filled her ears. She turned to the sound, soon recognizing the scent of Dewpaw.

"Sorry to interrupt the patrol," she mewed sheepishly, ducking her head apologetically. "Spruceleaf just wanted me to join you so I can gather some herbs."

"Ah, it's fine. We're on our way to the Boundary Stream anyway," Blackberry replied, padding over to her.

Shadowheart stood beside Emberpaw. "How far do you think the Boundary Stream is from here?" He murmured to her. "Use your hearing."

She nodded slightly, before shutting her eyelids and thrusting out her senses. The tang of salt instantly assaulted her tongue, however faint, and the noise of soft waves echoed in her ears. She sniffed the air, finding that the spray of water was lingering several fox-lengths away.

She opened her eyes despite not seeing a difference and turned to her mentor. "It is to the northeast of here," she said softly.

The tabby tom purred in delight. "Yes, very good! Your senses are getting better and more heightened," he praised.

She smiled brightly, ears pricked and tail flicking in excitement. She did good!

As the patrol traveled to their next stop, Emberpaw felt the grass under her paws crackle as she padded on it, crushing the brittle strands. Leaf-fall was near.

Images suddenly flashed in her head, full of colors and shades she could never imagine. The outburst in her mind caused her to stumble and halt, but the pictures kept coming. Dark skies, big sticks sprouting from the ground - which she could guess were bare trees, - soundless surroundings, nothing but dirt on the ground; she couldn't possibly comprehend what was happening as each visual passed to the next at a pace she could never hope to match.

Her vision then faded into the usual blackness after a final picture was shown...

Persistent amber flames rose into the sky, a nearly blinding sun shining in the sky, silence stretching on before both eventually flickered and died out, leaving a mere ember as its remains.

Chapter Three

[image]

//Finished as of 4-13-16//

Three

"Emberpaw! Hey, are you okay?" Shadowheart gasped, shaking the she-cat out of her thoughts.

"Huh? Oh, er, yes," she stuttered distractedly, ear flicking.

He didn't seem convinced, but he didn't push it.

"You two alright back there?" Blackberry called from a few fox-lengths ahead, "You're falling behind."

"Oh, yeah. Emberpaw just thought she heard something. But it was nothing, don't worry about it," Shadowheart responded, giving his apprentice a look before sprinting to catch up with the patrol.

The senior warrior simply nodded in response, turning back to lead the group of cats.

As she was walking, Emberpaw mulled over the images that had popped in her head. Was that the color green? Or was it pink? Maybe it was blue. She couldn't tell, all she knew was that bad things were coming. And the clans were where they were headed.

"""

"Emberpaw, come on. You mastered it already didn't you?" Shadowheart meowed, concerned as he watched his apprentice's form teeter as she tried to demonstrate the hunting crouch.

"Yes. At least, I thought I did. . ." the apprentice muttered, gritting her teeth as she struggled to crouch on all fours and still not let her belly fur brush against the grass underpaw.

"You're too tense," the tom stated, circling her figure to try and figure out what she was doing wrong. "And because of that, you aren't letting your hunting instincts kick in - which is an essential to hunting for the clan."

It's hard when you just saw colors for the first time at such a quick pace! Emberpaw thought to herself grouchily, her fur fluffing up in frustration and anger.

Sensing her distress, Shadowheart sighed and gently laid his tail across her back, effectively calming her down. "Emberpaw, are you alright? Your temper has been getting the better of you ever since dawn patrol the other day," he asked worriedly.

The she-cat's shoulders sagged, tired of the weight she was holding for the past two days. "I saw. I saw colors. I saw them," she whispered, blind eyes wide as she recalled the vision she had.

"You. . .you what?" Her mentor questioned, his own eyes widening at the sudden news. "How is that possible? When did it happen? Can you still--"

"I don't know! I don't know!" The she-cat cried, her emotions spilling over due to the flurry of questions. She sobbed in dismay and vexation, her eyes lighting up with a burning light. Flames filled their icy depths, the left orb slowly turning a ferocious violet that brimmed with anger and sadness.

Shadowheart backed up in both surprise and fear, confusion in his eyes as he watched his apprentice break down. "Emberpaw. . ." he murmured, trying to calm her down by muttering softly to her, stroking her pelt with his dark tail.

Eventually, her eyes returned to the serene and blank gold they were. Her fur lied flat, and the only sign of her explosion of emotions was her slumping shoulders and hanging head.

"I'm so sorry. I was just surprised and I didn't know what to think, so I just asked, and. . ." Shadowheart sighed, his ears flattening in consternation. "I'm sorry."

"You meant well," the ginger-and-black she-cat relied quietly, "I shouldn't have told you in the first place. I would--"

"No," the tom interrupted, sternly narrowing his eyes at her. "You needed to tell at least someone. If you kept it in any longer, you would've surely driven yourself insane with questions that would go unanswered."

"But I haven't done that before. . ." she muttered to herself, bewildered at the thought of telling someone something private. She was surprised she did it her own mentor.

"Well now you can," Shadowheart purred, attempting to cheer up the mood as he straightened his posture. "And if you don't want me to tell anyone, that's fine with me! I swear on StarClan."

Emberpaw's eyes went wide at that, staring at the tom as if he was insane. "Surely you'd tell at least *someone*! I mean, it'd be really hard and--"

"Nope! I have no one to tell really, so it honestly won't be too difficult," he replied, eyes flashing with loneliness before they returned amber.

The she-cat's ears flattened in sympathy, pressing her nose to his ear in a sign of comfort.

Shadowheart purred before shaking his pelt, smiling gently at her. "It's fine, really. You get used to it. Now, we have to discuss your eye changing color. . ."

"Oh that?" Emberpaw laughed nervously, licking her chest fur in embarrassment. "That happens when I have a whole lot of emotions and I can't control them. What color was it this time?"

The tom's words died in his throat as he struggled to comprehend why she was so calm about this. "Oh! Uh, purple."

She nodded in understanding, taking a mental note. "Okay, so purple is frustration. Blue is sadness, and red is anger. That's what I have so far according to Dewpaw."

"Wait, Dewpaw knows?" He asked in disbelief, wondering why he didn't know of their bond before.

"Oh, yeah. She's usually the one that calms me down," Emberpaw said sheepishly, ducking her head. "We're probably the closest out of all of my sisters. Hollypaw and Flickeringpaw usually ignored us, as well as Stripedpelt. I know they meant well, but Dewpaw and I were so quiet that they kind of forgot about us."

"Did Nightshadow neglect you too?"

"No. She was really nice. But she had to take care of my sisters more because they were much more adventurous," she replied, eyes clouding over with nostalgia. "And she couldn't really tell my father that something was wrong since she couldn't see that we were lonely herself."

"Then why don't you really hang out with Dewpaw anymore?" he asked, confused,

"She's busy. I doubt she cares anymore anyway," she responded, her gaze dropping sadly.

She looked up in shock and slight anger once the laughter of her mentor flowed into her ears.

"Are you kidding?" He laughed, eyes alight with humor. "She *loves* you! Why else do you think we see her all the time? She probably begs Spruceleaf to let her go and get herbs so she can have an excuse to see you!"

"Do you really think so?" Emberpaw asked hopefully, ears pricked.

"I know so. Now come on, maybe we can go visit her."

With that, the two cats padded back to camp in a peaceful silence, the other's company being all they need, as if they were father and daughter in another time.

Chapter Four

[image]

//Finished as of 4-15-16//

Four

Tonight was the gathering, and to say the least, Emberpaw was nervous. Several thoughts swirled around in her head, all of them negative what if's. What if someone knew she was blind? What if she tripped? What if she got pointed out by the other clans? What would the clans even think?

"Emberpaw, it'll be okay," Dewpaw assured softly, the gentle she-cat attempting to calm her sister down. "I went to the last one, and it was fine. Sure Breezestar stated our names, but it wasn't something new, and the other clans didn't seem to particularly care all too much."

"Yeah, but what if they find out?" The warrior apprentice worried, pacing back and forth in the corner of the clearing as the sun was slowly setting. "Shadowheart may have convinced Breezestar not to let me go last time, but I doubt he'd manage to do it again. Plus it may make me look suspicious."

The other she-cat sighed, green eyes exasperated but understanding. "Yes I know. But him and I will be with you the whole time!" she reassured once more. "Of course, before I have to go and sit with the other medicine cats."

"But so many things may go wrong!" Emberpaw whined, whiskers twitching with anxiety.

"No, you'll be fine," Shadowheart's voice cut in, his scent soon being recognized by the darkly spotted apprentice. "You're getting better at sensing things around you. You shouldn't run into anyone or cause attention to yourself."

Before she could retaliate, Sandflight's announcement echoed around the camp. "The cats going to the Gathering are Breezestar, myself, Gingerspots, Spruceleaf, Dewpaw, Hollypaw, Emberpaw, Swiftpaw, Echofeather, Shadowheart, Treeblossom, Blizzardflurry, and Stripedpelt."

As the chosen cats gathered in a line behind Breezestar, Emberpaw caught the scent of the newly-named Echofeather, who had gotten her warrior name just last quarter moon. It fit her quite well, with her long black fur and dainty grey paws to show for it. Though the apprentice didn't see it, she knew that her leader had chosen the perfect name for the she-cat.

"C'mon Emberpaw, don't want to get left behind," Shadowheart murmured to her, shaking her out of her thoughts. She nodded in silent agreement, following after her mentor and sister as they traveled to the MeetingPlace.

The group of LeafClan cats passed through their dense forest at a rather quick pace, which was causing the apprentice to falter and trip over roots from time to time. Luckily, they were at the back of the line, and Shadowheart and Dewpaw would help her through the rough patches of the undergrowth.

Before long, they had reached the Boundary Stream that wound around the MeetingPlace, with only smooth stones to get across.

She turned her head to her companions, ears flattened in fear and uneasiness as she heard the rush of the waves weaving between the rock path.

"It's fine," she heard Shadowheart whisper to her, his breath fanning against her ear, causing it to flick. "They're only a few mouse-lengths apart. And the stream isn't even that deep. I fell when I was an apprentice, and it only reached to my chest," he assured.

She simply nodded in response, but nerves were still tugging at her belly. She allowed Dewpaw to go first, paying close attention to how many steps she took before jumping. Emberpaw counted about six, before her sister had jumped roughly two mouse-lengths onto the stone.

Shadowheart gently nudged her forward, causing her fur to fluff up in agitation and surprise. After a soft amused chuckle from the tom, she scowled to cover up her embarrassment before she ran the same length she predicted Dewpaw had, and jumped in anticipation. When she landed, she let out a breath of relief when she felt the smooth surface under her paws rather than the icy waters of the stream. After hopping onto the next two and finally the grasses of the MeetingPlace, she let her racing heart reduce to a regular rhythm.

"See? I knew you could do it," her mentor purred, coming up beside her to guide the she-cat to the large group of diverse cats.

"No, I can't see," she joked, cracking a smile that mostly held relief from the uneasy event of crossing the Boundary Stream.

That caused a slight laugh to leave his mouth, followed by a failed stifled giggle from Dewpaw who was walking a bit ahead.

With much more ease in the air, the three cats padded into the flattened grassy clearing behind their clan, where three rocks shot up from the ground. Skinny oak trees lined the perimeter, with pinecones and small daisies littering the surface beneath the cats' paws. Peculiar scents bombarded Emberpaw, ranging from the scents of SunClan and SnowClan to the sweet tang of honey from a nearby hive that she guessed was high up in one of the trees. Stumbling back due to being overwhelmed, the firm structure of her mentor gently guided her forward again.

"You'll get used to it, I promise. I know it's a lot to take in, especially with your heightened senses, but after a bit, it'll feel like it's always been there," he said, keeping his tail on her back to lead her between the several cats in the clearing.

All she could do was nod soundlessly, attempting to get accustomed with her new surroundings. But before she could walk much further, her mentor once again stopped her.

"It's about to start. But don't worry, we usually get to socialize with the other clans when the leaders and Nature Guardians are done speaking," he informed her, sitting down in the shade of a tree to

watch all three clan leaders clamber onto their assigned rocks. Emberpaw soon joined him, carefully choosing where to put her paws so that she wouldn't trip.

"The Gathering will now begin!" She heard a rich female voice call out, the sound gentle yet firm. And after questioning Shadowheart, she now knew it was Maplestar, the SnowClan leader, who had made the statement.

It was beginning. Her first Gathering.

Chapter Five

[image]

//Finished as of 4-24-16//

Five

Dipping his head to the other leaders, Darkstar rose from his place on the rock.

"SunClan is thriving. Rabbits and falcons have been plentiful, and StarClan has blessed not only Rainpool, but our entire clan as well with an abundant herb storage. We shall mourn the death of Honeydrop, our previous medicine cat, but we will always know that she watches us from Silverpelt," he stated, dipping his head in silence along with everyone in the clearing.

"Honeydrop! Honeydrop!" Every cat shouted, honoring the she-cat Emberpaw didn't even know. Yet, when she looked up to the sky through sightless eyes, she saw a golden light, ironically nearly blinding. As she stared longer, not able to look away, several other lights appeared, all filling up the backdrop of pitch black.

"Emberpaw, hey. Are you alright?" Shadowheart's question finally shook her out of the vision she received, blinking her eyes to escape the images that were no longer present.

"Hm? Oh yeah," she replied, but she wasn't paying attention to what she was saying. Her mind was too preoccupied with buzzing thoughts and flashing images of glittering dots in the darkness of being blind.

". . .and we have a new warrior, Birdsong," Maplestar was finishing up, smiling proudly as a tortoiseshell she-cat shyly stood, dipping her head in gratitude to those who cheered her name.

"And now the Nature Guardian of SunClan will speak. Ravenberry," Breezestar stated, nodding to the black she-cat who had been

calmly waiting alongside two other cats.

"Nothing new to report in the Meadows of Sunlight," the steady she-cat mewed, eyes glistening unnervingly, even in Emberpaw's vision. "Except that Sunstar came to tell me an important message. After discussing with the the other Nature Guardians, we have decided to speak with *all* the clans about what happened. But before we do so, I will let the Nature Guardian of LeafClan go next. Gingerspots," she reported, not reacting to the curious and anxious murmurs that quickly spread throughout the crowd of cats.

This time, a pretty ginger-splotched she-cat hopped onto the rock. Her green eyes were regal and guarded, though they held much charisma. "A small drought was brought upon the Trees of Leaves, but nothing major occurred. Though much like Ravenberry said, I have also received a message from our first leader. Leafstar's words reeked with truth and hope, and so I hope you will feel the same," she informed, before nodding to the last cat - a white tom with multicolored eyes and a striped tail.

"Hello, clans. I am Stargaze, the new Nature Guardian. After Bluegaze's death, I took on the suffix of 'gaze' in her honor. The cause of her trip of going to StarClan is unfortunately unknown, with only her body being found between the border of SnowClan and the Mountains of Snow," his deep voice rumbled, eyes slightly tinged with grief as he spoke of his previous mentor. After the enthusiastic cheers of her name, he continued on. "But anyways, Snowstar as well came to me while there. All of us Nature Guardians will now speak the prophecy we received from our brilliant leaders. . ."

"***The shadowed ember, the ice of storms, and the ashes of the moon must follow to where the rain falls, following only the path made by silent cosmos and cracked hearts***."

Heavy silence fell over the clans, all of them feeling fear and shock, holding their breaths in anticipation as the air changed, however slight.

With a flash, Emberpaw's vision became clear. Blinking in wonder and confusion, she looked around the clearing with curious eyes.

Spotting Shadowheart, she was surprised to see how he was a grey tabby rather than a black tom like she had originally thought. But she didn't have enough time to look at the other cats she knew, as the loud grace of a she-cat's voice echoed into the night.

"Hello, Clans of the North. It is a pleasure to be known as one of your guides on this journey," a black she-cat said elegantly, the tip of her snout a contrasting ginger. However, her eyes were definitely the most remarkable physical trait about her; with them being a startling bright green that seemed to glow with wisdom and integrity.

Beside her, a black tom with white paws and chest fur took his turn in speaking. "Ah yes, I feel the same. You all are amazing cats, I can feel it," he smiled at them, respect in his eyes despite looking down on all of them from their point on top of a tree. "I know we can be allies. However, there are six specific cats who must be taken from you. My sister and I," he nodded to the she-cat, "-will take very good care of them, we promise you. The prophecy we have given you comes from what you know as StarClan - one of our good allies. . ."

He paused as gasps sounded throughout the crowd, even coming from the leaders and medicine cats.

"Yes, I know. This must be very surprising for all of you. We're sorry we notified you on such short notice, but your original leaders had commanded us to not speak of it until this night."

"And now we must go, for the sun is rising. StarClan cannot keep our forms physical for long. Clans, find your cats, and bring them here in two moons. That is when it will all begin," the she-cat meowed, a calm yet knowing aura surrounding her.

Both of them dipping their heads before the clearing, they disappeared in a flash of glittering orbs, turning Emberpaw's vision back to black.

Chapter Six

//Finished as of 4-29-16//

Six

When the strangers had left, the clearing erupted into chaos and panic. Wide eyes filled with fear and puzzlement were on nearly every cat, their bemusements blending into one loud ruckus as their voices overlapped.

But despite the overwhelming noises, Emberpaw kept her demeanor calm and composed. She forced her fur to lie flat, and her claws to sheathe. She inhaled deeply, before breathing out slowly to decrease the beating of her heart to a regular rhythm. Her dazzling golden eyes flashed open, her left one a bit brighter, almost like a flawless white. It glowed from where she sat next to her mentor, who was preoccupied trying to calm his own clanmates down. But once the glimmer of her left eye shone down upon the log that held the three Nature Guardians, their eyes widened even more as they caught sight of her. Gingerspots quickly sprinted over to the apprentice, squeezing past terrified cats.

"You! She-cat, are you aware of what is happening?" Her regal voice sounded before Emberpaw, voice filled with authority.

"You're. . . Gingerspots, right?" The blind she-cat replied, ignoring her question for a moment. "Hi. I'm Emberpaw, and to answer your question. . .no, I'm afraid not. I don't know who those cats were," she said, dipping her head in respect.

"And yet your eye glows with the light of knowledge," she hissed in disbelief, glaring at Emberpaw.

"Ah, sorry. That happens sometimes," the apprentice apologized, ducking her head sheepishly, "What color was it this time? Green or something?"

The Nature Guardian stared at her for a moment before answering. "N. . .no, it's white. And it's still going strong."

She nodded slightly. "Alright, thank you. Sorry about that, uh, Miss," Emberpaw dipped her head again, "I didn't mean for it to happen. But, uh, don't tell Breezestar maybe? I know we just got acquainted and all, but it would really cause unnecessary suspicions and my mentor and sister and I really don't want that. . . " she added, tilting her head up to look at Gingerspots pleadingly, eyes no longer different colors and strangely blank.

The green-eyed she-cat thought over her words. "Who are the cats that already know?"

"Shadowheart and Dewpaw," Emberpaw replied immediately, puffing out her chest proudly at the mention of her companions' names.

A soft smile graced over Gingerspots' face. "Very well then. But the other Nature Guardians also noticed. Oh and, try to actually *look* at who you're talking to next time. It really makes it obvious," she added, winking at the apprentice before waving her tail in farewell and leaving the surprised she-cat behind.

"""""

Emberpaw hadn't realized what exactly she had done until the thirteen LeafClan cats had returned to camp. In fact, right when her paws touched the finely compacted dirt, her eyes went wide with shock and alarm. The brief conversation with the Nature Guardian flashed through her mind, sending her thoughts reeling as she struggled to understand why she talked to her at all.

If she actually thought about what was happening while talking with the she-cat, she'd probably shy away and stutter over her words, completely making a fool of herself. However, that didn't happen, and she had no idea as to why. She couldn't remember actually thinking about what she would say. Instead she had just said words that were utterly the truth and nothing else.

She sighed heavily as her paws wondered toward the entrance of

the apprentice den, the structure carefully weaved with leaves and sticks. It smelled of the scents of the other apprentices, and also the now fading scent of Echofeather. Her ears flattened as she realized the clan would be swarming with kits soon, with Palewillow expecting any day now. Her kits were actually quite late, and after Cheetahfang confronting Spruceleaf about it, he had said that it was probably because it was going to be a large litter.

Emberpaw had never liked kits. Even though she was previously in the nursery, she had had experience with Swiftpaw and Mousepaw when she was just two moons old. They were only a moon older, and always rowdy. Herself and Dewpaw often kept away from them as kits before they eventually became apprentices, and they never really saw them now except for when they were leaving for patrols or were already sleeping in the den.

"You should sleep," Dewpaw said softly, tearing the spotted tabby away from her thoughts.

"Yeah." She glanced at her sister, before padding into the den, hoping for a good rest.

However, it was everything but that.

She awoke in a dense forest, sunlight streaming through the treetops and dappling the forest floor in golden patches. The soft songs of birds flowed through the air, gentle and melodic. The scuttles of squirrels and mice could be heard if listened to close enough, but something was still off. No scents lingered in the air, and even with the usually soothing feeling of the forest, the air was still and foreboding.

She looked around in wonder, eyes wide with curiosity as she discovered she could actually see. *She at first was taken aback by the sparkling lights around her, entranced by the sights she could never hope to imagine.*

But that curiosity was soon replaced by caution, as she noticed the disappearance of the wind. She looked around nervously, ears flattened in anxiety. She winced as she heard a yowl of triumph split into the air, silencing the woodland creatures.

Knowing better than to call out, she tried her best to quiet her pawsteps as she attempted to pinpoint where the sudden sound had originated, but the fallen leaves still managed to crunch under her touch.

When she was just about through a cluster of ferns, the calm light of the sun vanished, being replaced by torrents of relentless rain. She gasped in surprise, shrinking back as she was being pelted by countless drops of water. Thunder rumbled ominously, a bolt of lightning illuminating the forest that was now dark and eerie.

She whipped her head around, her ears remaining flat against her skull. Her fur was slick and matted, her ribs now showing through. She blinked her eyes multiple times to try and get the water out, the left one glowing a strange red-orange mix.

*"***Save him**,*" a voice echoed around her, making her jump for at least the fiftieth time. It seemed as though it was familiar, yet she couldn't tell who it was. When she tried to find it, she could no longer see, the familiar ink black filling her vision.*

"**Save him. . .before it's too late.**"

Chapter Seven

[image] [image]

//Finished as of 5-9-16//

EDIT ON 8-21-16: Hey! Just started school last week so chapters after number ten will probably come out a bit slower. Sorry!

Seven

Safe to say, Emberpaw was not thrilled to be woken up the next morning. Throughout the training session she had with Shadowheart, she was distracted. She was too busy with trying to decipher what all the feelings swirling inside her meant. She was curious, confused, and terrified. She was oh so terrified. So much that she couldn't even put it into words.

"Emberpaw, the last time you were like this you had seen colors for the first time. What's up?" Her mentor's voice caught her off guard. She glanced up at him, ears flattened in worry and eyes always so blank.

"So many things happening. So many things all at once," she whispered in distress, fur spiked up in alarm. Her blind eyes were wide as she mulled over the dream she had witnessed only hours before.

"What? C'mon dear, you have to be more specific than that," the tabby tom said, gently trying to push her for more information.

"I. . .I had a strange dream," she murmured, her voice so quiet that Shadowheart had to tilt his head to hear her. "I was somewhere with trees so big that the light of the sun could barely gets through. But. . .the air. It wasn't there," she said, eyes wide as she recalled the images, "And I could *see*! The leaves sparkled with dew, and the grass was so soft!" Her mew was filled with the same excitement she felt when she was witnessing it, though it soon faded into fear. "But, a cat's yowl suddenly filled the otherwise quiet air. I didn't expect

it, and when I tried to find where it came from, it started raining incredibly hard," she explained her mentor, her breathing becoming more and more ragged. "They told me to save him. They told me to *save him*."

With those final words, her body convulsed as she struggled to breathe. Sharp gasps filled the crisp air, alarming the tabby tom as he attempted to calm her down.

"Emberpaw! It's okay! Don't worry!" He assured her, pressing his nose into her flank as a sign of comfort.

The action caused her body to stop ferociously shaking, but she was still breathing heavily. Her left eye was burning a bright orange, nearly blinding him. But he finally realized what the color meant.

Fear.

He wrapped his tail around the panicking she-cat, pushing her into his fur like a father would. He reassuringly licked her head, hoping to calm her down. Her breathing was better, however choppy, and she lacked the energy to even move. Her eyes slowly closed in exhaustion, her head lolling to the side as she slumped against Shadowheart.

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". . .panic attack," the voice of Spruceleaf sounded, awakening the previously sleeping apprentice.

"Will she be alright?" Nightshadow asked anxiously, puzzling Emberpaw that she was there. Not wanting to disrupt the conversation, she kept her eyes closed and breathing even.

"She'll be fine," Dewpaw assured calmly, but knowing her sister her whole life, she knew that the grey and white apprentice was scared for her wellbeing.

Depending on her scent, Emberpaw knew that those weren't all the cats in the den. There was also Shadowheart, and surprisingly enough, Gingerspots.

Suddenly, a gentle prod caused her sightless eyes to open. She blinked them several times to try and look as if she could actually see, and by no suspicious call-outs, she guessed it had worked.

"Glad to see that you're alright, Emberpaw," Spruceleaf purred, his voice catching the she-cat's attention as she turned her head to gaze blankly at him. "Do you remember what happened at all?"

Fear. Shadowheart. Rushed breaths. Loud, loud beating. Intricate swirls of black and grey. The dream. Oh, she remembered the scene all too clearly.

"No," she replied simply, her voice monotone and devoid of emotion.

"Hm. . .alright," the brown tom nodded, seeming to take mental note, "Does anything ache?"

Everything. Her head seemed to be carrying a stone.

"No," she stated again, tone firm and sure. She could take care of this herself. If a dream like that was sent to her and by a certain she-cat like she expected, she knew it wasn't any of the medicine cat's concern. At least, not yet.

"Alright then. If you're not too tired, then you're free to go," he mewed cheerily, followed by the relieved sighs of the other cats in the den, excluding the Nature Guardian, who did nothing but pad out of the cramped space.

The tortoiseshell nodded in gratitude, walking out of the den and paying no mind to her mother and sister. She didn't want to speak to anyone right now, and she knew Shadowheart would simply follow her and let her be in silence.

As expected, she heard the tabby tom's paws trailing behind her, before he met her right outside the entrance of camp.

"Emberpaw, you know we have to talk about this," he murmured to her, before the pair walked deeper into the forest of LeafClan.

"It is none of Spruceleaf's business. It doesn't include him. So, I

didn't tell him," she said curtly, looking ahead and easily dodging and jumping over stray tendrils sprouting from the ground.

"So why did you tell *me*?" He asked curiously, causing the apprentice to halt in her steps.

Turning her head, she fixed her blind stare upon the tom, slightly unnerving him. "You've earned my trust. And I have a feeling that you will be included," she answered, a slight hint of uneasiness and anxiety hidden behind her words.

When he didn't respond, she thought nothing of it before continuing on through the dense undergrowth, having grown used to the thorns and tree roots protruding from the worn dirt path, the now setting sun casting amber rays through the branches, illuminating the forest in a soft light.

"Wait! Emberpaw, where are you going? We still have to talk!" Shadowheart called after her, worry lacing his tone along with frustration.

"I'm going for a walk," she replied plainly, not even sparing him a glance as the last rays of the day fell upon her dark fur.

Chapter Eight

[image]

//Finished as of 5-12-16//

Eight

"Spruceleaf! Palewillow's kits are coming!" The voice of Hollypaw called out, breaking the calm silence of the night.

The black she-cat was hurriedly speeding into the medicine cat den, but was soon cut off by Dewpaw's form holding a thick stick, and was soon followed by her mentor, who was holding a bundle of herbs.

The shout had risen majority of the clan, excluding the heavy sleepers like the elders and a few of the senior warriors. The cats padded into the clearing in front of the nursery, watching with anxious eyes.

Emberpaw had watched her littermate tell Spruceleaf what had happened, and had done nothing when she heard the labored breaths of the queen in the nursery. It wasn't that the tortoiseshell didn't want to help the pregnant queen, it was just that she was too busy dwelling on her own thoughts.

When she saw how many cats had come to see one of their own give birth, she realized that she probably should show some interest, or at least some kind of comfort to Palewillow's close ones.

Blizzardflurry, the pale she-cat's father, would not stop staring at the leaf-weaved den. His icy eyes gave nothing away, but the apprentice guessed he was worried out of his mind for his only daughter, especially after the death of his mate Morningfrost only about eight moons ago. But he was a relaxed tom, and he didn't dare show those emotions off.

Cheetahfang was a whole other matter. He kept pacing back and

forth, and would wince and look up in worry every time he heard his mate yowl in pain. His spotted fur was matted with sweat, and his green eyes glistened with both distress and excitement.

But before she could go over to calm the queen's mate down, Dewpaw popped out of the den, mewling, "Palewillow is fine! She has birthed three toms and two she-kits. Congratulations!"

The camp erupted into cheers, thoroughly awakening any other sleepers. Cheetahfang and Blizzardflurry seemed to burst with happiness and pride, and the both of them padded into the den after being given permission by the small pale apprentice.

Curious about the newcomers to the clan, Emberpaw crept into the nursery. Her nose twitched as she picked up the strong scent of milk wafting from where she guessed Palewillow was, and quietly walked over to her.

There, emitting warm scents, suckled five kits. Two were white, but the other had darker spots. Another one, a she-kit, had golden fur with white paws, whereas her sister's pelt was paler in color, with vague stripes adorning her extremely spiky fur. The last one was an incredibly small tom, who had grey fur with white specks.

"They're beautiful," Emberpaw said softly, knowing it to be true, even though she didn't like kits and that she couldn't even see them. But new kits brought new life. And new life was always welcome to the clan.

"Yes, we've decided to name the solid white tom Webkit, the spotted one Leopardkit, the golden she-kit Honeykit, the last female Blazekit, and finally, Tinykit," Cheetahfang purred, though he said the runt's name without much as enthusiasm.

"I'm so glad you got to see them, Emberpaw," Palewillow added gleefully, eyes shining, "I remember when you were just a kit. . ."

"Congratulations," the apprentice replied simply, not bothering to talk about her kithood. Dipping her head, she left the proud family behind.

"""

News of the kits brought hope and joy throughout the clan. Several of the cats went to check up on the litter daily, and when their eyes finally changed from kit-blue, their parents were so delighted to see how much their kits resembled themselves.

Blazekit, Honeykit, Webkit, and Leopardkit all had dazzling amber eyes much like their parents. Tinykit, however, had emerald eyes. When Cheetahfang saw how his son didn't take on any of his own traits, he completely ignored him. No one noticed this except for Emberpaw, whose observing nature was the only thing used to detect it.

One day, a moon after the birth, the tortoiseshell saw how the small tom looked lonely as his littermates played in the nursery just by how his scent was only in that spot, and how the scent of dismay wafted from him. A couple times, Webkit would try to cheer him up, but nothing would work. Eventually, the white tom gave up.

So, taking it upon herself, she walked over to Tinykit. She plopped down next to him, curling her tail around her paws. He glanced at her strangely, confusion in his eyes.

"What are you doing here?" he asked softly, blinking his green eyes.

"You looked like you needed some company," she replied nonchalantly, licking a paw and dragging it over her head and closing her eyes in peace. But after a moment of silence, she blinked open an eye, adding, ". . .and I was like that too eight moons ago. Alone. The runt. But my sister, Dewpaw, was there with me. It was much easier to be alone with a littermate. You're a smart kit, aren't you? You can befriend Webkit."

The small kit stared at her with wide eyes as he took in his words. Stumbling over his words, he finally got out, "You. . .you were like *me*? But Palewillow kept telling me how your whole family was great at hunting!"

Emberpaw laughed, the sound soft and slightly bitter. "No, my dear. They're talking about my sisters, not counting Dewpaw of course. It

took me nearly half a moon to learn the hunting crouch," she smiled sadly.

He kept looking at her in a weird way, almost as if he was studying her. Suddenly feeling uneasy, she shifted on her paws. Although she couldn't see him, she didn't need vision to tell how he was staring at her; his gaze seemed to scorch her pelt.

"Oh! You're blind!" he finally realized, before smiling brightly, slightly proud of himself for figuring it out.

Emberpaw sighed, grumbling, "Is it really that obvious?"

"No. I had to look at you really hard, and you're right beside me," Tinykit stated, tilting his head at her, "Plus you're really good at acting like you can see. I just could feel that something was off."

"Then you're observant," the tortoiseshell mewed, grinning. "That's a good trait to have. Although you're smaller than your littermates, you can be an excellent runner. Your form is made for intricate actions."

The grey and white tom widened his eyes for the second time during the conversation. "Really? Do you think Cheetahfang will pay attention to me then?"

Emberpaw's grin lessened, her blank eyes growing dimmer. "I don't know, dear. But just know that there are other cats who care about you," she said truthfully, sighing and turning around to pad away, leaving a thoughtful kit to stare after her.

Chapter Nine

[image]

//Finished as of 5-23-16// (late I know. I procrastinate, okay?)

Nine

The birth distracted the clan from the previous announcement by the strange cats that appeared at the last gathering. But Emberpaw didn't forget, and neither did Breezestar, Spruceleaf, or Gingerspots. The cats were all finally reminded when the tabby leader called a meeting.

"It has come to our attention that two of our own must be sent with the two allies of StarClan," she was saying, causing the clearing to erupt into uneasy murmurs and panicked gazes.

"But Breezestar! What if they're lying?" A senior warrior by the name of Violetflower asked, concerned.

"StarClan would've surely said something," the leader replied coolly, eyes sure and reassuring. "And the moon was shining perhaps even brighter on that night."

When no one objected to her answer, she continued. "I have spoken with both Gingerspots and Spruceleaf, and we have agreed that Shadowheart and Emberpaw will go on the journey."

Emberpaw's eyes widened in shock as she sat next to Shadowheart and Dewpaw, her fur fluffing up in surprise. Surely not? But when she saw how Breezestar's face remained solemn and serious, she knew that the she-cat was not at all kidding.

"Breezestar. . ." Nightshadow began cautiously, standing up from her place next to Stripedpelt. "Are you absolutely certain my daughter has to go on such a long mission? We don't even know what's going on! Or who those cats were! Or how--"

"Nightshadow, I understand your worry. However, the prophecy we received held the terms of 'shadow' and 'ember' and as far as I can tell, there are no other cats with those names in any clans," the grey tabby cut her off, knowing where it was going. "Besides, Emberpaw is doing very well in combat and speed. Not only that, but Shadowheart will protect her well. I'm sure StarClan knows what they're doing."

The black she-cat sighed and nodded reluctantly, glancing at her daughter with distress and pride. Pride for the fact her kit was chosen by StarClan to go on a mission.

"Alright then. Shadowheart, take Emberpaw out for training even more. We have less than a moon before you both go. Work hard, and represent LeafClan well," Breezestar directed, to which the tom nodded obediently.

Once the cats dispersed, Shadowheart immediately pulled the tortoiseshell apprentice toward the entrance of the camp before she could even turn to Dewpaw. The pair padded out at a brisk pace, an air of uneasiness and anticipation surrounding them.

"They can't possibly be serious?" Emberpaw whispered after a lengthy silence. Her whiskers kept twitching as she mulled over the events that had just happened moments before, thinking it couldn't be true.

"I'm as surprised as you are," her mentor responded, not even sparing her a glance as they kept walking toward the Mossy Clearing, where all the apprentices trained.

"But. . .I-I'm *blind*! I can't possibly do this! I won't know the territory, or-- or, anything familiar! Oh StarClan, the cats! Oh no no no! They won't know, but they will!" She breathed heavily as she spewed out her worries, beginning to pace quickly.

Before she could continue rambling, Shadowheart cut her off. "Emberpaw! It's fine! *You're* fine! Breathe."

She came to a stop, closing her eyes and trying to do what the tom asked of her. She straightened her posture, and, with difficulty,

began to slowly inhale. Her chest shook with the effort, but eventually, her breathing was even.

When she opened her eyes, they were back to their unnerving gold. She turned to her mentor, chest still heaving, before she gave a weak smile. "Thank you," she breathed.

He simply nodded, but worry was still sparkling in his amber eyes. "This is the third panic attack you've had since the dream," he pointed out.

"I know, but there's just been a lot on my mind," Emberpaw said, staring at her paws through sightless eyes.

Shadowheart sighed, knowing it was no use to convince the she-cat to tell him what had her so on edge. So with reluctance, he shook his head and bounded down the slanted hill that led to the Mossy Clearing, knowing his apprentice wouldn't have any problems since she was so accustomed to it.

Trotting carefully toward the large moss bed, she stood in front of the tabby tom, pushing any of her worries to the back of her mind. Now wasn't the time to dwell on such things; she had to train for the journey she had no choice but to go on.

"Alright. Recap on Belly Slash and Tail Whip. Do you remember how they go?"

The tortoiseshell paused, thinking back to when they trained the other day. Her eyes brightened as the memories came back to her, thus nodding her head. "Yes. Belly Slash is when you duck under your opponent and rake your claws through their stomach. But it's usually an attack for close range, and. . .and you can only probably use it once, considering that whoever you're fighting will probably expect it."

Shadowheart purred. "Very good! I'm glad you remembered the little details as well. Now do you recall Tail Whip?"

Emberpaw nodded again. "Yeah. It's when you're pinned and you flick your tail to make your opponent reel back. But sometimes they

can bite your tail, so you have to pay attention. There was something else, but I can't seem to remember. . ." She trailed off, ducking her head sheepishly.

"Ah, it's fine. I'm surprised you recall that much! You're right, you did forget one thing. And that's the fact that they can step on your tail, which has the same outcome of when they bite. Of course, you can just tickle their mouth with the furs of your tail, and it makes them cough it out."

"And to know when *they're* gonna do either of those moves, I have to focus on the way the breeze goes around their body, right? But I'm kinda bad about that. It's really hard," she huffed, tail flicking in agitation.

"It's fine, Emberpaw," her mentor assured, his tail curled neatly around him, "But it just takes practice. Remember, you can't just take a while to understand what actions they're gonna perform - they're gonna be fast. So how about you try to identify what move I'm going to do? It won't be too hard, but it will get tougher and tougher."

"I'm up for it," the she-cat grinned, eyes narrowed in determination.

Chapter Ten

[image]

//Finished as of 7/4/16// (Don't even start with me, aight?)

Ten

The remainder of the moon went just like that: constant training from dawn till dusk. It wasn't easy of course, but Emberpaw was growing better and better at sensing what her opponent would be doing. Although her body was lithe and agile, some muscle had formed from the many hours of training.

Their time had come to an end, with the full moon gently floating in the sky. No clouds were in sight, and the stars twinkled with joy.

This Gathering would be a bit different, with only the prophesied cats and their close ones going, as well as the clan's leader of course. Nightshadow and Dewpaw went with Emberpaw, whereas only Blackberry went with Shadowheart. Since the tabby tom was taken in as a rogue kit, no one really trusted him despite his excellence in climbing and hunting. The senior warrior was the only close one he had since she was his previous mentor.

It made Emberpaw a bit mad when he had told her, but he had explained how it was fine and he had gotten used to it. She dropped it, but it didn't stop her eye from dimly lighting up red.

It felt as if she was leaving too soon. Even though she could feel the serenity in the air and hear the soft melodies of crickets, fear was still crawling into her heart. She could already feel her heartbeat increase, but she forced herself to take deep breaths and calm down. She didn't need to worry her mentor with yet another panic attack. After all, what would the other cats going on the journey think when they see a heavily breathing apprentice? They'd probably think she was weak, so Emberpaw shook her pelt and narrowed her eyes. She needed to focus so that she wouldn't completely tarnish LeafClan's reputation.

The six cats trudged toward the Boundary Stream, this time Emberpaw crossing the obstacle easily. When she had passed it, she was surprised. She guessed it was because she was too busy worrying about meeting the other cats to overthink stepping over simple stones.

Immediately, as their group tread through some shrubs, the different scents of the other clans assaulted her nose. She winced at the intensity, accidentally bumping into her mentor.

"It's fine. You'll get used to it, just like at the last gathering," he murmured gently to her, nudging her forward.

She stumbled a bit before catching herself, her fur feeling hot. She shook her pelt and trotted after the tabby tom, trying not to seem like she was clinging to his side. She walked beside him but made sure to put a good few mouse-lengths between them. She straightened her posture and attempted to look sophisticated. She felt Shadowheart's gaze on her pelt, and after testing the wind around him, she knew he was nodding in approval.

She stifled a purr, and flicked her emotionless eyes ahead of her, ready to meet the others.

"Ah, Breezestar! I'm glad you could make it. I was worried you were having trouble picking your warrior and apprentice," the kind voice of Maplestar meowed, greeting the tabby she-cat.

"Yes. We're happy that you got here safely as well," Darkstar, SunClan's leader, agreed, dipping his head in respect.

"No, we just picked them a bit late is all. One of our queens birthed four kits, and I didn't want to worry the clan before some of our own even left," LeafClan's leader replied, smiling as she dipped her head. "And I'm glad the both of your groups came without trouble."

Darkstar nodded in understanding, a purr rumbling in his throat as he processed her words. "Ah, new life, I see? That's great! Indeed, our clans are growing stronger. We have two queens in the nursery right now, both with a healthy litter of kits."

"Yes, StarClan is blessing us graciously," Maplestar piped up, her voice warm with gratitude, "One of our queens was just announced expecting a quarter moon ago, whereas our four kits are going to be apprenticed in two moons!"

Emberpaw stood awkwardly as the leaders conversed, not sure how she was supposed to act. But once she felt a pair of piercing eyes set on her, she returned the stare with a blank gaze, unblinking. She could still feel the other though, as it felt as if her pelt was being scorched. But she dared not show that emotion, instead responding with a look that was neither challenging nor friendly.

"Ah, my apologies! It seems we've gotten caught up in our news," Breezestar said sheepishly, smiling at the cats gathered before her. "I shall introduce my cats first. We have Shadowheart, and his apprentice Emberpaw," the tabby she-cat stated, flicking her tail over to the two cats beside her.

The tortoiseshell apprentice felt her mentor move to stand up, and taking that as her cue, she followed suit. Although butterflies were swarming in her stomach, she kept her composure.

"Shadowheart is an excellent climber and also skilled in scenting. He's been training Emberpaw for roughly three moons, and has since showed her speed and observance. They work very well together, and I agree with StarClan's choice," their leader finished, dipping her head for SnowClan's leader to continue.

"SnowClan brings Moonfur and Ashpaw," Maplestar introduced, flicking her tail over to a pretty silver tabby she-cat and a flecked tom. "Moonfur is an incredibly stealthy fighter, whereas Ashpaw is more offensive in combat than anything. He's going to be a worthy asset, soon to be a warrior in only one and half more moons."

Following Shadowheart's movements, Emberpaw dipped her head in greeting, feeling the air around the she-cat's head dip down as she did the same in return.

"And finally, Stormbreeze and Icepaw," Darkstar mewed, "Stormbreeze is an extremely fast hunter, whereas his apprentice is a defensive fighter, his skills improving impressively for four moons

of training. I know these two will contribute greatly to this journey."

Repeating the previous gesture, the two LeafClan cats dipped their heads to a tabby tom who was paler in color than Shadowheart, and his white-furred apprentice.

"It's about time we begin to head out, then," a voice stated, startling the cats. Everyone turned their heads to the sound, relaxing once more when they realized it was the tom and she-cat from the gathering.

When their scents were recognized by Emberpaw, she hoped she could be able to see during the journey. But unfortunately, her world remained black.

After everyone's close ones murmured their goodbyes, the six cats started out, crossing the Boundary Stream and into unfamiliar territory.

"Falling Embers" Facts 1

-Emberpaw unknowingly has GAD; Generalized Anxiety Disorder. This explains her constant panic attacks and habit of overthinking. More specifically, she has panic disorder.

-Emberpaw's original design was a white and ginger tabby with icy blue eyes. But after realizing that she'd be mostly ginger-colored, she was changed to a black tortoiseshell since she couldn't have blue eyes otherwise. She still doesn't have blue eyes since I didn't want to have a bland character design with only white fur.

-Not many agreed with Breezestar's decision of assigning Shadowheart to mentor Emberpaw. Many of them wanted Cheetahfang to train her, but Breezestar denied the suggestion, saying how the tom's pushy and aggressive nature would only anger the calm apprentice.

-Another reason why not a lot of warriors agreed with the mentorship was because Shadowheart was young, being only 16 moons. Of course, some still didn't trust him due to him coming into the clan as a rogue kit, as briefly explained in Chapter Ten.

-Breezestar was a young warrior when the Great Fire happened, and was named the first LeafClan leader after the death of Leafstar. She, as of Chapter Ten, is 52 moons old (or 4 years and 3 months).

-Emberpaw's warrior name was originally going to be Emberfall to fit with the title, but it was changed due to reasons soon to be revealed. ;)

Chapter Eleven

//Finished as of 9-17-16//

Eleven

Emberpaw was on edge even after their home was a mere a speck in the distance. She didn't know any of these cats - excluding Shadowheart of course - and she didn't know what their boundaries were. She didn't know what they were like, and she didn't know if she could trust them.

They walked in silence behind their guides, the quiet awfully deafening. The only sound was the crunching of dead grass as they all traveled. The apprentice didn't know if she could speak for the others, but she could practically *feel* the awkwardness.

"So what are your names?" The SnowClan apprentice asked, brave enough to break the silence. The question was referred to the mysterious tom and she-cat, who seemed content despite the scorching heat and heavy atmosphere. She believed his name was. . .Ashpaw? Yes. Ashpaw.

The mainly black she-cat turned her head slightly to have direct eye contact with the young tom, smiling gently at him. "I would've thought you learned them by now due to the prophecy," she said in amusement.

"Silentcosmo and Crackedheart, of course," his mentor stated in boredom, her ears flicking in annoyance as she looked at her apprentice. "We know that. But where did you come from? You do not seem to be apart of any tribes since they have different names. You. . .you both have warrior titles," Moonfur inquired, her crystal blue eyes looking straight at Silentcosmo.

"Hm. That is none of your concern, young one," Crackedheart responded instead, no challenge or disrespect in his voice. "My sister and I were simply asked for a favor by StarClan. We complied,

since dire consequences would've ensued if we didn't." Although he looked to be only about twenty-five or so moons, he spoke as though he lived through seasons upon seasons. At least, to the other cats, for Emberpaw could tell by his scent that he was incredibly aged. She didn't know how he could keep form if he was dead, so she wasn't sure how old he really was.

But, apparently, that went unnoticed by the SnowClan warrior.

"What do you mean it's none of my concern?" she hissed, ears flattened and eyes ablaze. "You do realize we're following you simply because of StarClan, right? We don't actually trust you. And to earn that trust, you have to tell us certain information!"

A look passed between the littermates before the black and white tom responded. "There's specific information you must know, and some you don't. Where we come from is one of the things that doesn't matter, so you don't need it," he meowed as he continued to walk at a leisurely but somewhat quick pace. "Silentcosmo and I know you don't trust us, and quite frankly, we won't force you. You will learn whether or not to trust us in your own time."

Moonfur's fur bristled, her eyes icy slits. "What kind of fox dung is that! If the consequences of whatever we're even doing is so dire, why don't you just prove to us you're trustworthy so that we have a more proficient relationship?"

"Because that's not what we were taught," Silentcosmo stated softly, not moving from her place next to her brother. "You have much to learn, all of you. Patience is one of the traits. Moonfur, I believe your name was? You must learn how to be patient, how to give time to others. It can hurt those you care about," she finished gently, a sad smile on her face.

Moonfur resorted to grumbling to herself, when suddenly the two littermates came to a halt. Shadowheart moved subtly in front of Emberpaw in case an enemy were to burst in front of them. Mumbles of displeasure and annoyance erupted from the group, but were quieted with the simple flick of a tail by Crackedheart.

His sister's ears were perked as her nose twitched to pick up any

scents of threats. And by the way her eyes widened slightly and how her body tensed it seemed like she did.

"There aren't supposed to be any dogs out here," she muttered to Crackedheart, whose eyes narrowed as he looked around. The tom didn't answer.

The group of cats behind them looked around in confusion, wondering why they stopped and why their Guides looked so tense and serious.

The reason was nearly immediate as the loud rumble of barking erupted to their left. Big, furry beasts growled and snarled as they barreled out of the few shrubs that lined the plain. How they managed to get there was beyond any of the felines.

"Quickly! Run! We'll fend them off!" Crackedheart ordered, not taking his eyes away from the two dogs that were swiftly approaching.

Emberpaw's fur had bristled, her blind eyes wide as she smelled the rank stench of dog. She would've loved to help fight them, but she knew better. Still, her common sense seemed to have vanished as she turned to face the sound of dogs. She ignored the desperate pleas and commands to get away from Shadowheart, her eyes narrowed as she waited for the beasts to come. She wasn't one to run from a fight, even if all odds were against her.

"Apprentice! What do you think you're doing? You must go!" Silentcosmo shouted, her green eyes wide as she saw the blind she-cat crouch defensively. The others had run off obediently, probably shocked to see the creatures so close. They were used to seeing the occasional fox or badger, not dogs.

Emberpaw didn't respond, instead concentrating deeply at keeping her fear at bay. She would not go with her tail between her legs. She would not put so much responsibly on two cats. She would not put *anyone's* life in danger. She would not leave like a coward. Not like her father did.

Her eye lit up a deep green, the iris sparkling with determination.

Her hearing was focused solely on the ferocious barking, no longer listening to the commands to stay back. Her claws unsheathed, ears pinned to her head, as slowly a low buzzing enveloped her skull.

It grew progressively louder, before eventually, it stopped.

And instead emitted a small ball of green fire at the dogs.